



# UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
United States Patent and Trademark Office  
Address: COMMISSIONER FOR PATENTS  
P.O. Box 1450  
Alexandria, Virginia 22313-1450  
www.uspto.gov

APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/525,681	02/23/2005	Henning Walczak	18744-0030	9513

29052 7590 11/15/2007  
SUTHERLAND ASBILL & BRENNAN LLP  
999 PEACHTREE STREET, N.E.  
ATLANTA, GA 30309

EXAMINER
----------

SCHUBERG, LAURA J

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
----------	--------------

1657

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
-----------	---------------

11/15/2007

PAPER

**Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.**

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

# Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/525,681

Applicant(s)

WALCZAK ET AL.

Examiner

Laura Schuberg

Art Unit

1657

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

## Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) OR THIRTY (30) DAYS, WHICHEVER IS LONGER, FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

## Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 15 October 2007.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

## Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-15 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 15 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-14 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

## Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

## Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some \* c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
  - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
  - ☒ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

## Attachment(s)

- ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 3/21/05
- ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_
- ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application
- ☐ Other: \_\_\_\_\_

Art Unit: 1657

## **DETAILED ACTION**

### ***Election/Restrictions***

Applicant's election with traverse of Group I (claims 1-14) in the reply filed on 10/15/2007 is acknowledged. The traversal is on the ground(s) that the examination of each of the groups of claims would not be a serious burden on the Patent Office because of their close technological relationship. This is not found persuasive because evidence of serious burden, while required for U.S. restriction practices, is not required for Lack of Unity. The feature that the inventions have in common is methods of monitoring and modulating disease-associated activatory processes comprising determining and/or influencing the amount or activity of Mch4 (caspase 10 isoform). Since this feature is already known in the art, as demonstrated previously by U.S. Patents 5,786,173 and 5,851,815, it cannot be considered a special technical feature and therefore the inventions do not relate to a single general inventive concept.

The requirement is still deemed proper and is therefore made FINAL.

Claims 1-15 are pending.

Claim 15 is withdrawn from further consideration pursuant to 37 CFR 1.142(b), as being drawn to a nonelected invention, there being no allowable generic or linking claim.

Claims 1-14 have been examined on the merits.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112***

The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

Art Unit: 1657

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

The expression "disease-associated activatory processes" used in claim 1 is vague and indefinite and leaves one of ordinary skill in the art in doubt as to the meaning of the technical features to which it refers, thereby rendering the metes and bounds of the claim unclear. For examination purposes claim 1 is interpreted as being drawn to a method of monitoring or modulating disease progression.

Because claims 2-14 depend from indefinite claim 1 and do not clarify the point of confusion, they must also be rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph.

### ***Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102***

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 1-14 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Alnemri et al (US 5,786,173- from IDS).

Claim 1 is drawn to a method of monitoring or modulating disease-associated activatory processes comprising determining or influencing the amount or activity of caspase-10 or caspase-10 isoforms in a cell or an organism, wherein the activatory processes are triggered by non-apoptosis signals emanating from death receptors or non-apoptosis signals from non-death receptors of the TNF receptor family.

Dependent claims include the type of triggering of the activatory processes, the type of diseases included, type of information monitored, level of determination and level of monitoring.

Alnemri et al disclose methods of monitoring and modulating disease-associated activatory processes comprising determining and/or influencing the amount or activity of Mch4 (which is the caspase 10a isoform) in a cell or organism at the nucleic acid and protein level (column 8 line 22-column 12 line 37) (claims 1, 9-14). Although it is not further specified that non-apoptosis signals are meant (and only apoptosis is discussed), cancer and autoimmune diseases are included for treatment and monitoring (column 8), and these types of diseases fall under the group of activatory processes that are also triggered by non-apoptosis signals, according to the present application (pages 5-6) and inherently include the death receptors and non-death receptors claimed by Applicant as well as receptor crosslinking (claims 2-5, 7, 8). The inclusion of systemic lupus erythematosus (column 8 line 30), while characterized as an autoimmune disease, can also be characterized as a skin inflammatory disease since it inherently includes symptoms of skin lesions as well as other inflammatory related symptoms (claim 6).

Art Unit: 1657

Inherency is not necessarily coterminous with the knowledge of those of ordinary skill in the art. Artisans of ordinary skill may not recognize the inherent characteristics or functioning of the prior art. However, the discovery of a previously unappreciated property of a prior art composition, or of a scientific explanation for the prior art's functioning, does not render the old composition or method patentably new to the discoverer. The public remains free to make, use, or sell prior art compositions or processes, regardless of whether or not they understand their complete makeup or the underlying scientific principles which allow them to operate. The doctrine of anticipation by inherency, among other doctrines, enforces that basic principle.

Thus, a reference may be anticipatory if it discloses every limitation of the claimed invention either explicitly or inherently. A reference includes an inherent characteristic if that characteristic is the natural result flowing from the reference's explicitly explicated limitations.

Therefore the teachings of Alnemri et al anticipate Applicant's invention as claimed.

### ***Conclusion***

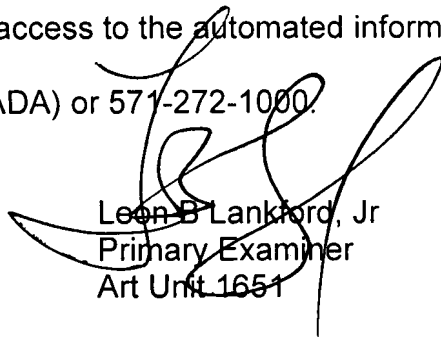
No claims are allowed.

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Laura Schuberg whose telephone number is 571-272-3347. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 8:00-4:30.

Art Unit: 1657

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Jon Weber can be reached on 571-272-0925. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



Leon B. Lankford, Jr.  
Primary Examiner  
Art Unit 1651

Laura Schuberg